

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

THE CRIMES OF OUR TIMES

*“Ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men,
but within ye are full of...iniquity.”*
– Matthew 23:28

L.R. Shelton, Jr.
1923-2003

The Crimes of Our Times

L. R. Shelton, Jr.

By the *crimes of our times* we mean the sins that have brought our great nation to the brink of eternal judgment. We are living in a day of great lawlessness and ungodliness, and just about every man, woman, and child is doing what seems right in his or her own eyes, giving no heed to the righteous demands of God's holy law. Wickedness abounds in every stratum of our society. Civil disobedience is the law of the land. Corruption in our judicial and law enforcement systems is an affront to the righteous claims of God and His holy law, for each official placed there is "a minister of God...a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil" (Rom 13:4). Therefore, according to Ezekiel 3:18, God will require at their hands the blood of every criminal whom they have let slip through their systems without punishment.

The God of the Bible hates sin, and we can rest assured that every transgression and disobedient act will receive a just recompense of reward (Heb 2:2), for God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity without punishing it.

The Bible further declares that God is no respecter of persons, and that He "will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality [in Christ]:" these shall have eternal life in Christ, based upon His substitutionary work at the cross; "but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness," they shall abide under

the indignation and wrath of God forever (Rom 2:6-8, 11).

I. Thou Shalt Not Kill

One of the crimes of our times is the sin of MURDER, which breaks the Sixth Commandment: “Thou shalt not kill,” or, “Thou shalt do no murder” (Exo 20:13). This crime, this sin of murder, is certainly one of the worst sins of our day, because life is the most precious thing that God can give. When killing anyone, the murderer is guilty of taking the life which God has given, and therefore he is “playing God” by saying when and how a man should die. But God doesn’t look lightly upon those who try to take His place. He declares in Isa. 42:8, “I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another.” In another place, He said, “The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up “ (1Sa 2:6, 7). He alone has the sovereign right to take away life.

Therefore, God has given us the Sixth Commandment as a fence about human life to preserve it, for it is sacred to Him. Yes, the Bible declares human life to be sacred. It is a divine creation, mysterious and magnificent in its beginning and possibility, utterly beyond the control or comprehension of any human being. It is never to be taken away at the will of anyone, for how can they tell the full meaning of that life and what it will bring forth? The revelation of God made to man out of His blessed Word proves that He has purposes for every individual and for the race, stretching far beyond the present moment or manifestation; and to terminate a single life is to set yourselves up as wiser and superior to God. The immensity of the issues of death is so great that there can be no sin against humanity, and accordingly, against God, greater than that of taking a human life.

Also, God has left upon the pages of His holy Word a statute which has never been repealed to this day, and it is found in Gen. 9:6: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." If the courts of our land do not act in capital punishment toward these murderers who have "played God" and taken a life of another, then God will require the slain person's blood not only at the hands of the murderer, but at the hands of the judge or officer who fails to put into effect the righteous law of God.

There are three sins in Scripture which are said to cry unto God. The first is OPPRESSION (Psa 12:5): "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him."

The second is SODOMY, or HOMOSEXUALITY (Gen 18:20, 21): "And the LORD said, because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me."

The third is BLOODSHED. This cries so loudly that it drowns all the other cries. In Genesis 4:10, God is saying to Cain, the first murderer: "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." Abel's blood had as many tongues as drops to cry aloud for vengeance. In Psalm 51:14 we hear David crying heavily unto God: "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God." Why? Because the blood of Uriah had been shed by David even though he had used the sword of the enemy to do it. We read in Exodus 21:28 that if a beast killed a man, it was to be stoned to death, and its flesh was not to be eaten. Therefore, if God would have a beast that had killed a man stoned to death, and this same beast not having the use of reason to restrain it, much more will He be full of wrath against those who,

against both reason and conscience, take away the life of a babe in the womb of a woman.

This being true, then, that the blood of the murdered one cries unto God for vengeance, let me ask you, How many cries are going up before God today as the murderer stalks our streets, enters into our homes, and sheds the blood of thousands of precious lives? Life is cheap today to the average individual, but not to God. But the saddest question of them all is, How many cries are going up today from the blood of millions who have been the victims of the sin of infanticide, the murdering of our unborn babies? The cries are going up to Heaven today into the ears of a holy, righteous, and sin-hating God, the cries of the blood of our unborn babies who are being murdered— butchered—by the millions around the world. From just about every hospital, clinic, doctor's office, and home goes up the cry daily unto God for vengeance upon those who are shedding the blood of innocent, unborn babies whom God Himself has made in His own image and likeness.

Hear it loud and clear, based upon the eternal Word of God which was written in Heaven and is settled forever: ABORTION IS MURDER, and "no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (1Jo 3:15). Except this sin be repented of and you turn to God in confession and trust the Lord Jesus Christ to cleanse you from this sin by His precious blood, you shall miss Heaven and for eternity abide under the wrath of God in Hell. That's God's Word, not mine. No murderer has eternal life abiding in him; he cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

Every woman who has premeditatively aborted her unborn child is a MURDERER in the sight of God. Every midwife, every doctor who has premeditatively aborted an unborn baby to relieve the mother of an unwanted pregnancy is a MURDERER in the sight of God, because they are "playing God" and cutting off a life which God has made, for all life is from God.

Every judge who has ruled or who enforces a law that allows abortion upon demand and even uses our tax money to support it, is in the sight of God a MURDERER, an accomplice after the fact. Every senator and member of congress, whether at the state or national level, who votes for abortion upon demand, is an accomplice after the fact and is a MURDERER in the sight of God.

This is plain preaching, but it needs to be preached in this hour. This is the worst of all crimes which is being committed in our country today—the killing of our unborn babies by the wholesale and doing it under the disguise of protecting the rights of the mother, who usually is only concerned about herself and not the God-given privilege of bringing children into the world. God is not unmindful of what is going on today! The blood of all these murdered babies cries unto God for vengeance; and unless there is an INDIVIDUAL REPENTANCE and a NATIONAL REPENTANCE, God's judgment is going to fall swiftly and hard upon this country.

God is concerned about that baby in the mother's womb; He gave it. It came into being, I know, by normal process of a male's and female's being joined together as one, but it was God who gave the life in conception, and God alone has the right to say when it should be taken away. God's Word says in Psalm 127:3-5, "Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them." Children are an heritage of the Lord; God alone gives little children; therefore, woe be unto that woman or man who destroys them, whether in the womb or out of the womb.

It has always been a strange thing to me how so many so-called doctors, judges, lawyers, and legisla-

tures can say that if a baby is killed in the womb it is not murder; but if that same baby is killed after it has come out of the mother's womb, then it is murder. O Consistency, where art thou?

Did you ever read those Scriptures in Exodus 21:22-25 that protect the rights of the mother and her unborn? Listen to what happened to the man who hurt or killed the unborn: "If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her (a premature birth or miscarriage), then thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe." In other words, the unborn child was protected from a doctor who would murder for money or the whim of some woman who wanted her pregnancy to be aborted because she did not want a child. You see, the unborn child has rights, too. If the unborn child was molested, then it was to be life for life; the one hurting the child in any way was to be punished.

This is God's law, not mine; therefore, God's judgment rests upon our murderous nation today because of all the shedding of innocent blood.

There are no Scriptures in the Bible that show us any plainer the beauty and the preciousness of life as in Psalm 139:13-16. Here we have described for us the life of the unborn child and how God looks upon it. Listen as David speaks of himself in his mother's womb: "Thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."

When we read this Scripture, all the talk about a fetus's not being a person goes to the four winds. Note carefully: ALL THE FORMATION OF THE BABY, who later became David the psalmist, WAS FORMED UNDER THE HAND of God. David said that it was "MY substance." He said, "I was made in secret...ALL MY members were written...when as yet there was none of them." It was David's body being formed, David himself being curiously wrought in the womb of his mother. That tiny being formed in the womb was David, David's substance, David's body. He was a person. And so is everyone who is conceived in the womb. Life starts at conception, because God gives it.

Therefore, let me say again: ABORATION IS MURDER IN THE SIGHT OF GOD, and this sin of infanticide is a sin that goes crying to God for vengeance.

O that our lawyers and judges and doctors and legislators would hear the Word of God and wipe their abortion laws from our books and not be a party to the scheme of Satan, which is to completely abolish our families and put a license upon the sin of fornication and adultery, which fosters this practice of murdering unborn babies!

Let each one of us who knows the Lord in reality cry unto God for revival and an out-pouring of God's Spirit upon us in this hour. O that confession of this sin would go up before God and a true work of repentance be worked in every heart that is guilty of it, and that this will be shown by a turning from the wicked practice and trusting the Lord Jesus Christ for cleansing by the merits of His precious blood!

*OH! that I could repent,
With all my idols part,
And to Thy gracious eyes present
A humble, contrite heart.
A heart with grief oppressed,*

*For having grieved my God,
A troubled heart that cannot rest,
Till sprinkled with Thy blood.*

*Jesus, on me bestow
The penitent desire;
With true sincerity of woe
My aching breast inspire.*

*With softening pity look,
And melt my hardness down;
Strike with Thy love's resistless stroke,
And break this heart of stone!*

Charles Wesley, 1749

II. Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery

I have approached this section with fear and trembling, crying unto my God for His words, words of warnings to give to each heart, warning of the consequences of sin and the judgment that awaits everyone who dies outside Christ; and at the same time, sounding the Gospel message that Christ receiveth sinful men, even you with all your sin.

Isaiah 58:1 tells me to “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgressions...and their sins.” So, heeding this commandment, we have this series on “THE CRIMES OF OUR TIMES,” or the sins that have brought our great nation to the brink of eternal damnation and judgment, by setting before your hearts the Sixth Commandment, “Thou shalt not kill,” or, “Thou shalt do no murder” (Exo 20:13).

I now lay before our hearts the Seventh Commandment, “Thou shalt not commit adultery” (Exo. 20:14). That this Commandment needs to be proclaimed across the length and breadth of our land goes without saying, because we are living in a day when this Commandment is just about completely disregarded by our nation, and this promiscuous society has thrown down the challenge to All-Mighty God, saying, “I will do as I

please, live as I please, practice what I please; therefore, stay out of my life with your Word, your commandments, and your Puritanical religion.”

Yes, the sins of fornication and adultery, the unlawful intercourse between unmarried men and women and between men and women who are married to another, has plunged our nation, our society, into a cesspool of debauchery, which is drowning precious souls by the tens of millions. The whole fabric of our society is so eaten up with this sin of lust until God is about ready to spew this nation out of His mouth in complete reprobation unless there is a turning back to Him in true, heartfelt repentance, which will show itself in the forsaking of this sin and the crying unto God for mercy in Christ.

God, the Bible, the sanctity of home and marriage are made fun of, laughed at, ridiculed, and made the butt of a thousand and one jokes every day over the radio and television and in the newspapers, magazines, and movie houses.

But my dear friend, God does not take sin lightly. Even though a work of judgment does not come swiftly, yet it is surely coming. “The soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezekiel 18:4). God’s wrath will be poured out against sin. Remember Hebrews 13:4: “Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.” We also read in Rev. 21:8 that whoremongers...shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

As we go through the Bible, we see that we are warned over and over against the sins of fornication and adultery, because they are against God’s holiness, God’s righteousness, God’s throne. It is against God’s plan of marriage and the home. It is against everything that is pure, clean, upright, honorable, and holy in God’s sight.

According to Leviticus 20:10, the death penalty was pronounced upon that man who committed adultery

with another man's wife. Also, the woman who committed adultery with another woman's husband was sentenced to die. Even the sin of fornication, the unlawful intercourse of unmarried men and women, was punishable by death, according to Deuteronomy 22:23-27. So we see our holy and righteous God did not then, nor does He now, look lightly upon this sin; and even though this sin is not punishable by death in our day, we can rest assured that unless it is repented of, confessed, and forsaken, and you, my dear soul, turn to Christ for the forgiveness of it, there will come a day when it will be punished in Hell.

I must state that the Bible teaches that marriage is honorable and the marriage bed undefiled; that is, sex in the bonds of marriage is from God because He said in 1 Corinthians 7:2, "Let every man have his own wife, and every woman have her own husband." But dear friend, God hates the sins of fornication and adultery because they are against God's plan of marriage and the beauty and blessedness of the home.

Today our society is so sex-obsessed that if it thinks of wrong sexual behavior at all, it seems to think of it only in terms of the illicit sex act itself—the lustfulness of it, the uncleanness of it, the uncontrolled passion of it, the perverted use of it. If that is the main wrong of sexual misbehavior, it is easy for men to make excuses for themselves and to side-step the conviction of the Holy Spirit. "Surely," they say, "it is something merely biological, something quite natural." They say that it is purely arbitrary on the part of society, even of God, to draw a line and say that before a certain date (marriage) the act is wrong, but after that dateline it is right. They also say that what is done may be lustful, but it is none the less natural. Therefore, I would say if the main sinfulness of such misbehavior is the lustfulness and impurity of the act itself, it is easy for men to argue in this way.

Now, the Bible does condemn this sin because of its lustfulness, impurity and perversion, as we would see if we translated those verses in I Cor. 6:9, 10 into modern English. The King James Version reads: “neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, shall inherit the Kingdom of God.” But to hear them in our modern-day English, they would sound like this, and carry a far greater meaning of how God does condemn lustfulness, impurity, and perversion: “promiscuity, immorality, unfaithfulness, prostitution, homosexuality, masturbation, lesbianism, lustful imagination, indulgence in pornographic literature and X-rated movies and plays.”

From the use of these words, we see that God’s Word does condemn this sin because of its lustfulness, impurity, and perversion, but this is the aspect with which the Bible, the only expression of the mind of God that we have on the subject, is least concerned. This is not where God’s Word puts the emphasis. God’s Word puts the emphases upon the wrong done to a loving and holy God, and upon the wrong done to others and to yourself. You see, sin is self-centeredness, independence of God, and the expression of your rights instead of the rights of the holy and righteous One whose creature you are and Who commands obedience to His laws which He has set up as the criteria of your life. Sin is lawlessness, the over-stepping of the bounds which God has laid down in His holy law.

Therefore, this sin of sexual misbehavior that has engulfed our society today is going to be judged by God on the basis of what it has done to Him, His law, and your fellow man.

First, the sins of fornication and adultery, which break the Seventh Commandment, are SINS AGAINST YOURSELF. They leave you naked before God and bring you under the terrible judgment and wrath of a sin-hating God. They rob you of your manhood and

womanhood. They rob you of all that is holy, pure, clean, and godly. They leave you guilty, defiled, unclean; and lead to lying, stealing, covetousness, and brokenness in body and soul. They drive you to unreasonable acts, lead sometimes to insanity, break up homes, and wreck lives of husband and wife and children. They even drive one to murder. Yes, these sins are horrible because of the wrong that is done against yourself.

Second, the sins of fornication and adultery, which break the Seventh Commandment, are SINS AGAINST THE FAMILY. There is nothing more sacred in God's sight than marriage, motherhood, childhood, fatherhood, and the family as an entity. This is God's institution. This is God's plan for His creatures. The first institution that God made was the home. In Genesis 2:18, He said that it is not good for man to live alone, so He made a woman, a help meet for him, and told the first couple—the first family, the first man and wife, Adam and Eve—to be fruitful and to multiply and replenish the earth. That is the reason why homosexuality and lesbianism is such an abomination in the sight of God, because it is sin against the family, God's appointed means for man and wife to multiply and replenish the earth.

Therefore, when the family is destroyed by this sin of adultery, every member of that family suffers. When a man takes his neighbor's wife, he breaks up two homes. He takes another man's property and deprives him of his rights and his own wife's rights. When a woman takes another woman's husband, she deprives her of her rights. Then the children are deprived of their rights to the love of both parents and the authority of love, which should characterize that home as God's institution of discipline and instruction.

Not only this, but the heartache, sorrow, suffering, tears, and privation that stay for a lifetime (unless sweetened by the cross of Christ) are experienced by all

members of the family. This is where this sin leads to, and it is being experienced today by untold millions in our society.

This is certainly Satan's master stroke against our nation today, to so undermine the home that all the fabric of our society would come loose and our nation would fall into utter ruin.

Third, the sins of fornication and adultery, which break the Seventh Commandment, are SINS AGAINST THE NATION. The family is a unit of individuals sharing a common life and governed by a common love. Our nation is a union of families, and when these families are broken up because of the sins of lust and uncleanness, then the nation suffers and falls apart at the seams. This is what has happened in our nation today. Unless there is a going back to the family, to the home, and to the family altar in repentance and confession and honesty of heart before God, then our nation is gone forever. It will go the way of Assyria, Greece, and Rome.

Fourth, the sins of fornication and adultery, which break the Seventh Commandment, are SINS AGAINST GOD. This is the basic wrong in sexual misbehavior, but the one which is most forgotten—the wrong done to God. If we look at the example given to us on the pages of Holy Writ concerning David and his sins of adultery and murder, we will note that this was the aspect of his sin which David ultimately came to confess more than any other, for in his Psalm of repentance, Psalm 51, we hear him cry (v. 4): "Against thee, thee only (O God), have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight."

Yes, this sin is against God's goodness. He planned marriage and the home for men and women to enjoy each other in that intimate union of love. He gives the marriage bed, and he who sins against it sins against the goodness of God. God is the One who in His great love gives the man to the woman, and the woman to the man,

to become one flesh in marriage; and he who sins against this love of God sins a great sin. This sin strikes a blow at the very heart of God, so He must, by an eternal necessity, exclude “the abominable...and whore-mongers” (Rev. 21:8) from the new heaven and the new earth, and give them their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

I cannot close without crying from the depths of my soul, “O America! Wake up! Come back to God in repentance!” O my dear friend, guilty of the sins described today, wake up! Down on your face before God, crying for mercy in true repentance, before it is too late! Confess unto God that you have dishonored your own body, that you are guilty of selfishness, that you have robbed your husband or your wife of the love due him or her, broken up your home, robbed your children of your love and support, robbed your neighbor of his wife or of her husband. But most of all, confess that you are guilty of sinning against the holy and righteous God whom you have made to look upon all of your lust and uncleanness. Show that your repentance is real, by right now breaking off every unlawful relationship and living in righteousness and true holiness, by God’s grace, all the days of your life. When you have done that, then take encouragement by the gospel record that by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and His shed blood He is able and ready to receive you, forgive you, and cleanse you from all your sins, and give you a new heart and nature so that you will be enabled to walk in this pathway of righteousness and true holiness.

Also, for your further encouragement, let me point out that many of the saintly Christians in the church at Corinth were converts from these very practices we have described today. Paul, in I Cor. 6:9-10, certainly thunders out, “Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind—homosexuals, nor thieves,

nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.” But having said all this, he joyfully adds (v. 11), “And such were some of you: BUT (what a glorious “but!”) ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” The church at Corinth was a church of born-again, converted, and delivered fornicators, adulterers, homosexuals, thieves, and drunkards. And why not? That is what the church is meant to be—a bunch of sinners saved by the grace of God! So I say, dear friend, God is able to do this for you. Cry after Him in true repentance, and look to Christ in trustful dependence upon His love, grace, and mercy; and surely you shall be saved and delivered to walk in a new life with the holy God.

III. Sexual Immorality

The words of 2 Timothy 4:1 and 2 have been ringing in my soul, the words of the aged Apostle Paul to his “son” in the Gospel, Brother Timothy: “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”

Yes, we have the exhortation to preach the Word—God’s Word, God’s message; for God has ordained the foolishness of preaching by which to save them that believe.

Giving heed to this word, I have cried unto my living God that He will direct His Word to our hearts and that hearing His Word we may cry unto Him for mercy. To preach His Word regarding His Commandments is my desire.

In the last two sections we have brought before your hearts God’s holy and righteous Commandments dealing with the Sixth and the Seventh Commandments, which read: “Thou shalt not kill,” and “Thou shalt not

commit adultery” (Exo 20:13, 14). We desire to go into that Seventh Commandment again today, showing from God’s Word that this Commandment covers all acts of sexual activity outside the marriage bed, and especially the sin of sodomy which has swept our nation like wild-fire both among the men and the women, young and old.

We are warned in Luke 17:28-29 that, as judgment fell upon Sodom and Gomorrah because their sin was very grievous against God and cried unto Him because of its greatness, so judgment will fall upon America today, because this same sin of sodomy is so blatantly practiced and also cries unto God because of its greatness against His holiness.

This sin of sodomy (HOMOSEXUALITY, LESBIANISM) has come out into the open, and these wicked men and woman are asking to be dealt with as if their practices are quite the normal thing. We are asked to believe and sanction that which God in His holy Word has called an abomination in His sight. We are asked to give them the right to practice and promote their immoral acts because they “enjoy” what they are doing, and they say it is only the natural way to act, even though God in His Word has marked them for judgment.

We might as well put our stamp of approval upon every murderer, because it must be right to kill if they “enjoy” it. We might as well put our stamp of approval upon every act of incest and rape because the guilty “enjoy” doing it. We might as well put our stamp of approval upon every thief because he “enjoys” stealing. We might as well put our stamp of approval upon every disobedient child because he “enjoys” disobeying his parents and doing his own thing.

No! We cannot put our stamp of approval upon that which God hates. We must lift our voices against every sin that defies God, whether it be open or behind closed

doors, for they are both seen by a holy and righteous God.

To the law and to the testimony, what does God's Word say upon this subject of sodomy (homosexuality and lesbianism), not what we think it is; not what some news reporter thinks it is; not what some television talk shows say about it; not what some teachers, preachers, church leaders, psychiatrists, or the poor souls who are caught in this sin say about it, but what God's Word says about it.

In Deuteronomy 23:17, we read God's mind upon the matter: "There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel." The Hebrew will bear out that the word "whore" used here can be translated "sodomitess," or "lesbian," for the word is the feminine of sodomy. We can read it, then, as follows: "There shall be no lesbian of the daughters of Israel, nor a homosexual of the sons of Israel." This does not leave us any doubt as to what God's Word says about it, and His attitude toward the practice has not changed, because He does not change. It is still a sin and is hated by the holy God.

Also, very strong language is used in verse 18: "Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog, into the house of the Lord thy God for any vow: for even both these are abomination unto the Lord thy God." Here again the Hebrew will bear out that the word "whore" can be translated "sodomitess," or "lesbian;" and to show God's utter contempt for this awful sin of sodomy, God calls a homosexual, or a sodomist, a DOG. This makes me shudder to think of the awfulness of this sin in the sight of God; and yet the lesbians and homosexuals of our day flout their sin in the face of God, trying to force their damnable way of life upon our society and make us accept this awful sin as something glamorous.

In Leviticus 18:22, God's Word calls this sin an abomination in His sight: "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination." Or, it could read, "Homosexuality is absolutely forbidden, for it is an enormous sin." This same commandment is still in effect today, for God has not changed.

Now listen to Leviticus 20:13, and hear God's judgment upon this sin in the days of Moses. As God has not changed, His attitude toward it is still the same, and it shall be punished in the day of judgment unless it is confessed, repented of, and washed in the blood of Christ: "If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them." What God's Word is saying here is this: "The penalty for homosexual acts is death to both parties. They have brought it upon themselves." Let me repeat: God has not changed, and this sin still bears the death penalty—not before man's courts, but before God.

This is not my word, but God's Word. Saying that it is not a sin does not alter God's Word. Saying that it is none of my business what you do does not alter the fact that it is sin in the sight of God, that it breaks the Seventh Commandment and will bring down the wrath of God upon you if it is not confessed, repented of, and washed in the blood of Christ.

This sin is wrecking lives by the millions today across our great nation, and many more are being added to the number as it is held up before our young as some great thing to indulge in. They do not tell you the loneliness that such a life causes. They do not tell you that about half of the people caught in this sin are dependent upon alcohol and drugs to keep them going. They do not tell you about the fact that over half of the suicides in the country are among the homosexuals. They do not tell you that most of the cases of syphilis and gonorrhea are among those practicing this sin. They do not tell you

of the guilt and shame that attaches itself to those caught in this mesh of Satan. They do not tell you that once caught in this sin there is usually no escape from it except by the grace of God in Christ Jesus.

I have just finished reading five articles written in our daily paper on the subject of homosexuality, and my whole being has cried out against this sin that is glamorized and popularized among so many today. I cannot stay silent. I must lift my voice against it, if perchance our God will warn some soul against it and bring one soul out of it by His almighty power!

Listen to what the New Testament says about this sin! In 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 we read: "Have you forgotten that the kingdom of God will never belong to the wicked? Stop being misled; people who are sexually immoral, none who are guilty of adultery or of homosexual perversion...will possess the kingdom of God" (Amplified Bible). In 1 Timothy 1:9-10 we read: "Keeping this in mind...that the law of God is against those who live unholy lives and insult holy things, those murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, and manslayers, immoral men and homosexuals, kidnappers, liars, those who bear false witness" (Amplified Bible). And the law of God is against whatever else is opposed to sound Christian teaching.

What a word this is! God's law is against these sins! And numbered among them, along with murder and kidnapping, is the man or woman who is caught in this sin of homosexuality. The law of God is against you, and the soul that sinneth, it must die (Eze 18:4, 20).

From these two Scriptures we learn that the person caught in this sin is not saved, is not a Christian, and is under the wrath of God, because he or she is a law-breaker—not a breaker of man's law, but God's law. This leaves no room for any church or denomination to even have to debate as to whether or not people caught in this sin should be ordained to preach or allowed to

come to the communion table. Since they are not Christians, they only take the communion at the damnation of their souls; and surely as far as preaching is concerned, they could not be called ministers of Christ when He flatly denounces them and tells them that as long as this sin is not confessed, repented of, turned from, and they crown Jesus as Lord of their lives, they do not belong to Him.

This does not mean that they cannot be saved, for surely God's grace is sufficient to save any sinner. But it does mean that for anyone to be saved who is caught in this sin, they must face fairly and squarely the fact that what they are in is sin, and only by the grace of God and the power of God can they be delivered from it. The homosexual seeking help must begin here, or he does not begin at all. This sin must be confessed, laid out before God as sin. The poor soul must forsake it, turn from it, flee from it, and turn to God in Christ if ever he or she is to be delivered. And the good news is, there is certainly hope in Christ!

I believe I hear some soul crying now, "But, Pastor, you don't know how helpless I am against this sin." No, I'm sure I don't; but I do know how helpless I am against other sins, and the only difference between you and me in this particular one is the grace of God. But listen: it is when you own helplessness and cry unto God for mercy in Christ and trust Him to give power to overcome this sin or any sin, can you have victory. In your helplessness, if you will turn to Him, you can be helped in Christ who died for the sin of sodomy as well as all your sins.

There is one more Scripture in the New Testament dealing with this sin of homosexuality, and it is found in Romans 1. This to me is one of the most awful chapters in the Bible, for it pictures men and women who have turned the truth of God into a lie, being given up by God to their own lusts and the deep depravity of their

own hearts. I shudder to think of souls so far gone that the Word of God says three times in these verses (vv. 24-28), “God also gave them up to uncleanness...God gave them up unto vile affections...God gave them over to a reprobate mind.”

Listen to these verses in Romans 1:24-28: “So God let them go ahead into every sort of sex sin, and do whatever they wanted to, so they degrade their own bodies with one another...even the women turned against God’s natural plan for them and indulged in sex sin with each other, and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women, and have run wild with lusts toward one another, men with men practicing shameless acts, and incurred in their own persons the inevitable penalty of their own perverseness. Moreover, since they considered themselves too high and mighty to acknowledge God, he allowed them to become the slaves of their degenerate minds, to do those things which were indecent” (Amplified Bible).

To me, there is no language that can describe the life of a person caught in this sin as this language of God Himself. It shows us the last end of those who will not acknowledge God and who call darkness light and sin virtue.

I have delivered this message with two reactions: first, with an utter hatred for this sin which has damned the lives of so many today and is fast making our great nation a Sodom and Gomorrah. Second, my heart cries out for those of you who are caught in this sin, because I know the wrath, misery, and judgment that hangs over your poor soul. My attitude toward your sin is hatred, because God hates it. My attitude toward you is one of love and compassion, and that is the reason for delivering this message today, to call you to repentance. I bid you come to Christ, come to His blood that can wash you whiter than snow. Come to Him for a new heart and a new nature so that you will be changed into His like-

ness and walk in the pathway of righteousness and true holiness.

On one hand I hold out to you life, love, forgiveness and power over your sin in Christ; but on the other hand I can hold out nothing but death, wrath, and eternal judgment in Hell unless you repent. My cry unto each one of you is to flee to Christ!

*We were lost, but we are found,
Dead, but now alive are we;
We were sore in bondage bound,
But our Jesus sets us free.*

*Strangers, and He takes us in,
Naked, He becomes our dress,
Sick, and He from stain of sin
Cleanses with His righteousness.*

*Therefore will we sing His praise
Who His lost ones hath restored,
Hearts and voices both shall raise
Hallelujahs to the Lord.*

John S. B. Monsell, 1863

IV. Drunkenness

As my Lord laid upon my heart this present series of messages on, "THE CRIMES OF OUR TIMES," or the sins that have brought our great nation to the brink of eternal damnation and judgment, Isa. 58:1 came time and again into my soul, and I cannot get away from its message: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and...their sins." The message of Ezekiel 3:17-19 has also been upon my heart: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I

require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.”

I have tried, by the grace of God, to lay before our hearts the sins of our times that are damning souls to Hell. First, I brought before you the sin of MURDER (“Thou shalt not kill”) and showed God’s judgment upon this sin of ABORTION that has swept our country today—the killing of our unborn children. Second, I brought before you the sins of ADULTERY and FORNICATION, which have broken up our homes, ruined families, and swept untold millions of our young people into Hell. Third, I brought before you the awful sin of SODOMY, the utter perversion of lust by the LESBIAN and the HOMOSEXUAL as they sin willfully against God’s Word, His grace, His light and His cross.

The fourth sin that has swept our nation today and is damning its millions into Hell is the sin of DRUNKENNESS. This is a sin that God hates and a sin that brings God’s judgment just as surely as the sins of MURDER and ADULTERY. The Bible in plain and powerful words classifies drunkenness with stealing, murder, idolatry, adultery, and all other sins (1Co 6:9, 10): “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind...nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.”

The sin of drinking and all that it leads to is condemned upon the pages of Holy Writ. Listen to God’s Word, not my word; not the word of the liquor crowd; not the word of some liquor-loving preacher or so-called Christian; not the beautiful advertisements of newspapers and magazines, radio and television, but God’s Word. In Proverbs 20:1 we read, “Wine is a mocker,

strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.” Nothing could be plainer than this: any type of alcoholic beverage is, in the sight of God, a mocker and a deceiver. In Isaiah 5:11 we are warned, “Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them!” Here we have God’s woe, God’s judgment, upon the drinking man or woman. They are not wise, because they are deceived by the demon of drink and abide under the judgment of God. The Word of God is plain: alcoholic beverages of any kind are condemned by God.

Here is how God’s Word paints a word picture of the man or woman under the influence of alcohol. We read in Proverbs 23:29-35, “Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?” Then comes the answer to these questions: “They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.” Then comes the warning: “Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright.” Why? Because, “At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.” Then comes the warning of the consequences of drinking: “Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.” Then listen to the man who was so drunk he did not know what he was doing: “They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not.” Then hear him as he awakens from his stupor: “I WILL SEEK IT YET AGAIN.” Why? Because drink has made him its slave, and back to it he must go because of its power over him.

Drinking brings its own curse, for it bites as a snake and leaves its venom in the inward parts of the man or woman caught in its snare. Drink makes a man its slave,

and there is no argument against that statement. We all know that this is so. We see it on every hand, every day. Our hospitals, rehabilitation centers, half-way houses, jails, and insane asylums are filled with men and women who have become slaves to drink, telling in bold truth the enslavement of its power. Brilliant minds of men and women in every walk of life have been lost to society and that which is good because of drink, as they have become slaves to its power. Presidents and officers of great companies, given over to drink, have slipped down the ladder of society until they have become the dregs of society. Homes have been wrecked and marriages torn asunder because of this demon of drink. Children have been murdered by drunken fathers and mothers, and have gone naked and hungry because all the money has gone for liquor or beer. Drink has filled our divorce courts and has left in its path wrecked lives and homes scattered upon the face of our land. And as if that were not enough, our society is paying billions every year for the upkeep of those whose lives and homes and dignity have been wrecked because of the demon drink.

A person caught in the clutches of drink is worse than a beast, because he cannot quit. The words of Proverbs 23:35 become the words of every man and woman who drink: "I WILL SEEK IT YET AGAIN." After the woe of the wine cup has brought them sorrow, pain, wounds without cause, and a hundred and one other evils, they cling to its horror as a miser to his gold. Why? The only possible answer lies in the fact that they are hopelessly ensnared in the clutches of its habit and cannot quit.

Our Lord said that indulgence in any sin leads to slavery: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (Joh 8:34). No matter what the sin may be, indulgences for pleasure soon become indulgence by force—a slave to sin! Especially

is this true of liquor! The occasional social glass becomes the repeated glass to steady the nerves until, finally, no amount can calm or satisfy the raging passion.

Everyone under the sound of my voice today can think of some family, some friend, some loved one whose life has been ruined by drink. I am not telling you something you don't know. Our papers are filled every day with the crimes that are committed by drunken fools. "I did it when I was drunk," they claim, thinking that they are excused before God and man just because they were temporarily out of their minds. But God holds a man responsible for what he does whether he is sober or drunk.

Drinking brings sorrow—we all know that it does! And yet liquor and beer are sold freely, profits are reaped from them, and our society condones them as something necessary. Dear friend, strong drink is not necessary. It is something to flee from, to leave and never indulge in again. We do not have to have it to live. I don't care how pleasing the ads on television and radio make it. What did Proverbs 23 say? "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright." Why? Because "it biteth like a serpent."

Listen once again to Proverbs 23:29, 30: "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine." The path of the intemperate man is a trail of tears and sorrow and blood. An example of this was so forcefully brought out in an article in *The Saturday Evening Post* a few years back, entitled "Death on M-24." The horror of it all was shown in the picture accompanying the article. There, in a twisted mass of metal, were two automobiles which had crashed head on. Bodies and blood seemed to be everywhere. A teenage boy was jammed sideways in the

front of the car dead. A young 16-year-old girl, with one leg still in the front seat of the car, was sprawled head-long out onto the pavement, face down, hair spread out all over the concrete highway—dead. Underneath her body was a 17-year-old boy, his head crushed flat. He died in the ambulance at the hospital entrance. Another 16-year-old boy was also dead, and a 16-year-old girl with both legs broken and bones protruding the flesh was the only survivor of that hour of horror, tears, sorrow, and bloodshed.

In the other car, the mother of eleven children was found with her face mashed into the glove compartment—dead. The husband and driver was halfway in the front seat and halfway in the back—dead. At home were the couple's eleven children, suddenly made orphans: the oldest fifteen and the youngest not yet one-and-a-half months. So terrible was the accident that the bodies of the husband and wife could not be moved from the car, and it was necessary to tow it away with their bodies still in it.

Six people dead; eleven babies orphaned! But the real tragedy lies in the fact that the teenage driver deliberately drove his car at high speed head on into the other cars path because he was so crazed by drink. On the floor of the car stood a bottle half full of beer, incredibly, upright. Added to this is the fact that the couple in the other car were returning home from a night on the town, drinking and dancing. "Death on M-24" was the direct result of a liquor-crazed teenager's madness and a liquor-befuddled man's inability to think quickly enough to get out of the way!

Tears, sorrow, bloodshed, and death walk side by side with drinking. But the questions I ask are: Where is the man who sold them the liquor? Where is the man who gave him the license to sell it? Where are the men who passed the laws that allowed him to sell it? And where are the men who made it and bottled it for con-

sumption? All are guilty before God for the murders of these precious souls!

How can I say this? Because God's Word says it. Listen to Habakkuk 2:15: "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!" What an indictment before God! Did you hear that? Every man who gives his neighbor a drink, and every man who sells another a drink, is under woe, or judgment, of God! That does not sound good, does it? Under the wrath of God when we give our neighbor drink (liquor, beer, wine, or any alcoholic beverage)! These are not my words, they are the words of God Himself, who cannot lie. Remember these words, you fathers and mothers who cause your child to drink! Remember these words, every one of you, when you give or sell alcoholic beverages to another! Remember—you are under God's wrath!

One of the saddest and most cruel stories that I have read about this demon of drink came out of Los Angeles, where a man was left by his party-going wife to take care of the baby. Before the wife left she put the baby to sleep and moved its crib to the living room, placing it near the fireplace. When the wife returned in the wee hours of the morning, she found her husband passed out on the floor drunk, an empty whiskey bottle by his side bearing mute evidence as to the cause of the mangled, mutilated form in the crib. Drunken frenzy had caused this inhuman brute to heat a poker from the fireplace until it turned red, then white with heat. When it became hot enough to suit his madness, he plunged that poker into the nostril of that sleeping bundle of sweetness. When the child awoke screaming he jammed the sizzling poker down its throat. Then, repeatedly, in torture too vile and sadistic to tell, the insane, whiskey-maddened father thrust the burning poker into every opening of that baby's body until life had fled.

And then there are some of you who will tell me that I should not be angry and righteously indignant against that which would make a man worse than a beast! Shall I condone alcoholic beverages which lead men and women to Hell? I believe every person who calls himself a follower of Jesus Christ should hate this liquor traffic of our day; hate that which has turned our highways into murder traps; hate that which has caused men and women to die by the millions; hate that which has turned our homes into brothels; hate that which has wrecked the minds of our young people; hate that which has caused our young men and our young women to give themselves over to every form of lust; hate that which has caused most of our government leaders to lean upon it to help them make their important decisions.

Every follower of Jesus Christ should pray for revival, for old-time Holy Spirit conviction of sin, and heed the Word of the Lord which says, "And be not drunk with wine but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph 5:18), walking in righteousness and true holiness. It is time to stand up and be counted and stand out against sin.

Once again, God's Word calls DRUNKENNESS not disease, not sickness, but SIN; and sin proceeds from an evil, wicked heart. Therefore, the only hope for a real cure of this sin is the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which was shed at Calvary for the remission of our sins. This sin must be faced squarely, dealt with in reality, named before God as sin, and confessed and repented of by the grace of God. It must be forsaken, given up in totality, never to be returned to again. When this happens, then the Lord Jesus Christ whom you have trusted will come into your life by faith in His Holy Spirit, and He will give you strength to hold on your way in a life of holiness and sobriety.

Unto each one of you who know Christ in reality, let us pray for God's Spirit to work in our lives, in our families, in our communities, and across our land to deliver from the demon of drink, and to save these poor, precious souls who are caught in this mesh of Satan's, and to set sinners free in Christ.

I love each one of you, and I have shown it by crying unto you today to stop drinking, to flee from the sin of drunkenness, and to walk in the only life worth living, the life of sobriety in Christ, who gives life more abundantly in His Spirit. "The Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save" (Isa 59:1).

*The blood has always precious been;
'tis precious now to me;
Through it alone my soul has rest,
from fear and doubt set free.
Oh! wondrous is the crimson tide
which from my Savior flowed;
And still in Heaven my song shall be,
the precious, precious blood.*



L.R. Shelton, Jr. (1923-2003) was born and raised in New Orleans, Louisiana, where he became associate pastor in his father's Baptist church. While he did not have the opportunity to attend college or seminary, as a young man he devoured the writings of Spurgeon, Pink, the Puritans, and Lloyd-Jones. In 1970 he began a church, Christian bookstore, and gospel outreach in Litchfield, Minnesota. There he developed a God-given burden to share classic Christian literature from prior centuries freely worldwide. In 1978 the ministry moved to Pensacola, Florida, where Mount Zion Bible Church was founded. In subsequent years were added printing presses, the prison ministry (1984), the Chapel Library audio ministry (1987), the *Free Grace Broadcaster* quarterly magazine (1988), and the Mount Zion Bible Institute (1995).